

Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EB-11 L-03 OPIC-12 SS-15 PA-03 PRS-01

USIA-15 RSR-01 RSC-01 /081 W
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R 091355Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0403

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1029

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, LY

SUBJECT: BUNKER-HUNT NATIONALIZATION

REF: STATE 156020

1. DIRECTOR/POLITICAL AFFAIRS, MINFONAFF, NAJIB SHAYBANI, CALLED EMBASSY AUG 9 SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH CHARGE. LATTER IS ON LEAVE IN COUNTRY, THUS POLOFF MET WITH SHAYBANI. SHAYBANI PROTESTED BROADCAST HE HAD HEARD ON BBC QUOTING "STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN" EXPLAINING USG POSITION ON BUNKER-HUNT NATIONALIZATION. HE SAID SAW CONTRADICTION IN SUCH DEPARTMENT RELEASE ON THE SAME DAY THAT RADIO TUNIS BROADCAST THAT USG SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS WITH LIBYA. EMBOFF SAID HE HAD NOT HEARD BROADCAST BUT HAD SEEN IN WIRELESS FILE STORY IN NY TIMES ATTRIBUTED TO BUNKER-HUNT OFFICIALS WHO WERE QUOTING DEPARTMENT.

2. SHAYBANI INDICATED CONCERN THAT USG HAD NOT LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE, BUT HAD SEEN FIT TO MAKE PUBLIC ITS POSITION ON BUNKER HUNT MATTER. EMBOFF NOTED THAT USG DOES NOT HAVE TOTAL AND ABSOLUTE CONTROL OVER CORPORATE ENTITIES. SHAYBANI SAID THAT AT LEAST ONE COULD HAVE NOTED THAT LIBYANS REJECTED THE USG PROTEST NOTE. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT BBC IS NOT OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN FOR USG. SHAYBANI SAID LARG DOES NOT AT ALL VIEW NATIONALIZATION OF BUNKER HUNT AS POLITICALLY INSPIRED, NOTING THAT LARG HAD STATED
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THAT NATIONALIZATION EFFECTED BECAUSE BUNKER HUNT

OPERATED IN LIBYA DUE TO LEGAL ANOMALY.

3. COMMENT: EMBOFF SAW NO REASON AT THIS TIME TO
ATTEMPT CONTINUE ARGUMENTATION ON WHETHER NATIONALIZATION
WAS OR WAS NOT POLITICALLY INSPIRED. BELIEVE SHAYBANI
WAS MERELY TRYING TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT FOR HIS
SIDE. AT SAME TIME HE ALLUDED TO HIS EFFORTS
(REPORTED SEPARATELY) TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS ON
COMPENSATION FOR PREVIOUSLY NATIONALIZED PROPERTY,
IMPLYING THAT "RESURRECTION" OF BUNKER HUNT ISSUE
MIGHT MAKE HIS EFFORTS MORE DIFFICULT.
JOSIF

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